
Elisée A. Dutil Correspondence

Elisée A. Dutil (WWII)

4-15-1945

Sympathy Letter to Alphonse Dutil from Chaplain Ralph J. Smith

Ralph J. Smith

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Re: DUTIL, Elisee A.
ASN 31116655

HEADQUARTERS THIRD INFANTRY DIVISION
Office of the Chaplain
A.P.O. #3

15 April 1945

Mr. Dutil
143 Bartlett Street
Lewiston, Maine
(Through Channels)

My dear Mr. Dutil:

As Division Chaplain of the Third Infantry Division to which Elisee A. Dutil was assigned at the time of his death, I am writing to you to offer my deepest sympathy. Elisee was seriously wounded on 18 March while standing outside of a building in a German village that received a direct hit from an enemy shell. Fragments struck him in the chest and abdomen; he died later the same day. He was buried in a beautifully located and well-kept cemetery. I myself held the services.

According to his Commanding Officer, "Pfc Dutil was called 'Frenchy' by everyone, and as tablewaiter of the staff officers' mess was known and well liked by all the officers of the regiment. He had received news of his mother's death a few weeks before and had taken it rather badly. He was conscious when he left the aid station and spoke of his hard luck first losing his mother and then being hit himself. This was the third time Pfc Dutil had been wounded." He paid a great price that we as a free people might continue to enjoy all those things that make life worth living. By that he showed his intense love for us: "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Not only our nation, but our very civilization is deeply indebted to him: a debt we can never repay. Surely God in His infinite mercy has given him the reward he so well deserves.

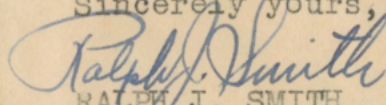
The Government is very conscientious about returning all personal effects to a soldier's next-of-kin; but it takes a little time. I do not know whether Elisee left any personal effects. If he did, rest assured you shall receive them in due time. Should you ever have any questions concerning them or the exact location of his grave, or the manner of obtaining his body after the war, only

The Quartermaster General
War Department, ASF
Washington, D.C.

may answer them. I refer you to him.

I assure you that I shall remember your loved one in all my Masses to my dying day. As for yourself, may God grant that your courage in bearing your bereavement be as great as that of your son in the performance of his duty.

Sincerely yours,



RALPH J. SMITH
Chaplain (Lt.Col.) USA
Division Chaplain